

Abbey Kindergarten Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	253988
Inspection date	12 October 2007
Inspector	Rosalie Mary Turner
Setting Address	Ketts Park Community & Recreation Centre, Harts Farm Road, Wymondham, Norfolk, NR18 0UR
Telephone number	07941 284143
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Registered person	The Trustees of Abbey Kindergarten Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Abbey Kindergarten Pre-School opened in 1970 and was re-registered following a move to new premises in 2000. It is run by the Trustees of Abbey Kindergarten Pre-School and operates from the Ketts Park Community and Recreation Centre in Wymondham, Norfolk. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09.15 to 12.00 during school term times.

There are currently 31 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 17 children receive funding for early education. Children mainly come from the local community and surrounding areas. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The pre-school employs four members of staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications and one member of staff is working towards a qualification.

The pre-school has achieved a Norfolk Quality Assurance Scheme and an Investors in People award.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are learning to keep themselves healthy because staff talk to them about why it is important to wash their hands after using the toilet and before they eat their snack. They remind children not to handle more than one bread stick as 'you may spread germs', therefore, they protect others from possible cross-infection. Children's health is further safeguarded because the staff use an anti-bacterial spray on surfaces where food is served and they are trained to ensure snacks are prepared and served in line with food hygiene requirements. Staff are guided by a comprehensive policy that details actions they should take if children are unwell and parents have given their written permission to enable them to seek emergency medical care. All staff are trained to administer basic first aid treatment and some have completed advanced training so that they are able to administer medication if a child suffers a severe allergic reaction. As a result, children's well-being is robustly assured as they are able to receive help quickly if they are ill or injured whilst in the pre-school.

The pre-school takes positive steps to help children to eat healthily and ensure that they learn what to eat to promote their growth and development. For example, the staff obtain details of children's dietary needs before they provide care and make sure that children do not share food in case they suffer from allergies. The adults offer a choice of milk, water or juice and breadsticks at snack time and ask parents to provide fresh fruit or chopped vegetables. Children develop their taste buds within cooking activities and they meet their own health needs because they are able to help themselves to fresh drinking water from a jug that is available throughout the session.

Children are developing a positive attitude to taking exercise and they look forward to playing in the recently improved outside play area. Staff provide a valuable range of physical activities both indoors and outside to encourage children to use up their surplus energy. For instance, they greatly enjoy moving to music and completing action rhymes in the large hall or showing off their stamina with the wheeled toys.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children come in happily and quickly separate from their carers because they receive a warm welcome from the staff. The adults work hard to transform the large hall into a child-centred environment by decorating the walls with attractive posters and displays of art work such as 'Elmer the elephant'. As a result, children settle well, stay relaxed and most are emotionally secure. The careful layout of equipment breaks up the large area to minimise opportunities for children to run so that their safety is assured.

Children independently access a stimulating range of good quality resources that are safely maintained. They can play freely with minimum risk of hurting themselves because the staff regularly check the toys and remove items if they are damaged or broken. The adults remind children how to use resources safely by telling them 'we have to keep the sand low or it may get in someone's eyes'. Children's safety is a priority. Staff are vigilant to assess risks before the start of each session and they take immediate action to minimise any identified hazards. For example, they use safety guards to prevent children from trapping their fingers in the toilet doors and ensure that the doors to the outside are always secured so that children are unable

to leave unobserved. Children are learning to be responsible for their own safety because they practise regular fire drills so that they are familiar with the process for evacuating the centre safely and quickly in an emergency.

Children are never left alone with people who have not been vetted. The staff supervise them closely at all times and they invite the local police officers to the pre-school to help children to become aware of 'stranger danger'. Staff are guided by a comprehensive child protection policy and they demonstrate that they are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of children at risk. Local Safeguarding Children Board contact details are kept to hand so that staff may take action as soon as they have concerns, therefore, children are protected from the risk of possible harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and they get on well with the staff who are kind and caring in their approach to them. For instance, they sit with them, join in with play and are genuinely interested in what children say and do. The effective key worker system ensures the adults have an in depth knowledge of children's individual stages of development and a very realistic expectation of their abilities. Consequently, staff are able to ask questions to extend learning such as 'what makes the sand hot?' or 'what does it feel like?'

Children are beginning to show consideration for each other through sensitive support from the staff who provide suitable reassurance and encouragement. They carefully explain 'we need to be gentle with other children's work or they will be sad' and praise children enthusiastically when they take turns or share.

Children build on their existing skills as the staff make commendable use of 'Birth to three matters' to provide a balanced programme of child-led and focused activities. They encourage children to make an active contribution to the session by initiating play and choosing resources from items that are set out or stored at their level. They concentrate well and take care with their work because staff make appropriate use of praise to help them to persevere with challenges, such as cutting out their own work.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children achieve well in all areas of their learning because staff have a thorough understanding of the Foundation Stage. They use themes to plan a balanced range of stimulating activities that can be adapted to ensure each child makes robust progress towards the early learning goals. Staff group children very well so that they are able to challenge their learning by using indirect questions to make them think. For example, children enjoy individual attention as they complete craft activities, play in small groups to experiment with sand or water and interact in a large group during registration. Each child is carefully observed as they play and staff skilfully use their findings to identify the next steps in learning and produce plans that promote their future progress.

Children have a positive attitude to learning and they are forming firm friendships with each other and staff. Their independence is well fostered as they select play resources and put on their coats and boots before going home. Children enjoy talking about their experiences, including what they do at home, and they have a good range of vocabulary which they use confidently when talking to peers and adults. For example, children describe the sand as 'salty'

and 'rough' but staff quickly extend learning by explaining that 'grainy is another word we could use for rough'. Children enjoy looking at books and often self-select from the pleasing range of fiction and reference books that are attractively set out in the libraries. They have consistent opportunities to recognise their own names within routine activities and skilfully locate their name cards at snack time or when they hang up their coats. All children have the chance to practise their early writing skills on a daily basis and mark-making materials are often provided in the role play area so that they can make lists or appointments.

Children actively use numbers within every day activities and carefully count down using their fingers during number rhymes. Staff extend their mathematical skills by asking them to hold up number cards so that they begin to recognise numerals. They encourage the children to practise simple calculation such as 'one more' or 'one less' by asking them 'how many have we got left?' as they leave the group. Children begin to talk about shapes within routine play saying they are going to 'make some more circles' and they particularly enjoy making spotty patterns with the shape stickers. They are fascinated by the resources that tempt them to question how things work such as the magnetic fish and they have regular opportunities to explore technology by using laptop computers as part of their play. Children learn a sense of their own community through having visitors into the pre-school but they also celebrate festivals such as the Chinese New Year to help them to value and respect diversity.

Children use a valuable range of tools to develop their manipulative skills and they skilfully cut paper or pour water from one container to another. They negotiate the vast indoor space well during planned physical play and show increasing spatial awareness when they dance so that they do not bump into each other. They control their bodies well, stopping and changing direction with ease, but children are particularly skilled at operating the wheeled resources or crawling through the long tunnel.

Children's creative development is very well fostered. They have stimulating opportunities to express their ideas and feelings creatively through role play, music and art or craft work. Children are responsible for their designs from beginning to end and they relish using paint or drawing materials. They are given a sense of pride in their own work because some is displayed to decorate the hall. Children are encouraged to explore texture using many different materials such as sand, collage materials and play dough.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children feel at home in the playgroup because the staff know them well and appreciate their varying needs or differing home circumstances. They help children to feel good about themselves and encourage them to show a caring attitude towards each other by their sensitive use of praise. For instance, the adults frequently say 'well done!' 'good boy!' or 'that's lovely!' Children are able to access a range of age-appropriate resources such as books, dolls and puzzles to encourage them to discuss other cultures, role reversals or age differences.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They are confident, able to make friends and have planned opportunities to learn about the faiths and beliefs of others through discussing festivals. Most children behave very well but staff handle challenging behaviour in a consistent and positive manner. They quickly intervene, get down to the children's level and quietly explain 'we don't run or someone may get hurt'. As a result, children soon calm down and they begin to understand right from wrong. The staff are positive role models and their calm, consistent responses help most children to manage their own behaviour.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive appropriate support to meet their additional needs because the staff are quick to recognise any developmental delay. There are procedures in place to guide staff if children appear not to be making progress and the member of staff nominated to co-ordinate care for children having additional needs has accessed relevant training. Consequently, she is able to work closely with parents and other agencies to develop individual educational plans that ensure all children are helped to participate to the best of their ability.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. A welcoming brochure explains how they can be involved in the care and early years education that is provided for their children. Parents and carers complete a 'child profile' so that the key workers know what their children are able to do and they continue to exchange information informally at the beginning and end of each session. All parents are invited to help on a rota where they can see the activities provided and discuss how their children are progressing but few do so. Staff display plans within the setting, however, there are insufficient formal opportunities for parents or carers to share their children's learning. Furthermore, 'learning stories' are not always available so that parents can include milestones that their children have reached at home. Consequently, staff cannot ensure that the activities they provide fully challenge children to move on to the next step in their learning.

Although parents state they are currently pleased with the quality of care and education that the setting provides for their children, the pre-school has not developed a procedure to log complaints that may arise in the future and the policy advising parents how to contact Ofsted if they have a concern is out of date. As a result, children's welfare could be compromised.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from being cared for by suitably vetted staff who are committed to ongoing training. For example, they continue to access short courses to ensure that their knowledge and skills are up to date and all members of staff are currently working towards a higher level of qualification. The staff communicate effectively and work well together as a team to provide a happy learning environment. They organise the available space so that children can make choices and the layout of the equipment breaks up the large area. Older children have times to be active or to concentrate and the daily routine provides plenty of variety to hold their interest. Younger children who wish to play quietly or rest are able to nap on beanbags in the bar area and stay relaxed.

All legally required documentation is in place although the attendance records do not show the times that staff and children are present to ensure they are fully safeguarded. Staff are guided by a range of policies or procedures that are specific to the setting and regularly updated but there are gaps in the complaints policy that could compromise children's welfare.

The leadership and management is good. The trustees follow thorough recruitment procedures to ensure that they employ skilled staff who are appropriately qualified. Robust induction practices help newly appointed staff obtain a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities so that they quickly become an effective team member. The annual appraisal system ensures that all staff continue to have valuable support and guidance. It enables the trustees to monitor the effectiveness of the setting and helps staff to maintain their enthusiasm to plan, deliver and monitor the educational programme. In addition, staff and committee members meet together to review the provision and address any perceived weakness. For

example, they have recently improved the outside play area by providing secure fencing and safety surfacing. As a result, children's welfare and learning is effectively supported. The pre-school is guided by clear aims and objectives that enable staff 'to promote and extend children's learning within a relaxed and caring atmosphere' as evidenced by the good progress that they are making towards the early learning goals.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the pre-school was recommended to develop snack time to limit the amount of time children are away from play.

Staff have introduced a staggered snack time so that children are able to choose when and with whom to take their break. As a result, they do not have to wait for their snack, play is less interrupted and children are able to finish an activity to their satisfaction before taking a break.

There were no key issues at the last early education inspection but the pre-school was recommended to improve planning for imaginative play to provide challenges for all the children.

Children make more use of the role play area because the resources are varied so that it becomes a cafeteria, hospital, doctor's surgery or hairdresser's shop. They become engrossed in their fantasies and the more able children are suitably challenged through the provision of mathematical and literacy resources such as a till, calculators, a key board, push button telephones, books and mark-making materials. Therefore, children's creative development is well fostered.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- improve the system for registering children and staff attendance to ensure it shows the hours of attendance

- develop a system to log complaints and update the complaints procedure to reflect changes to the regulations.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- increase opportunities for parents to share in their children's learning and contribute to their developmental records.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk